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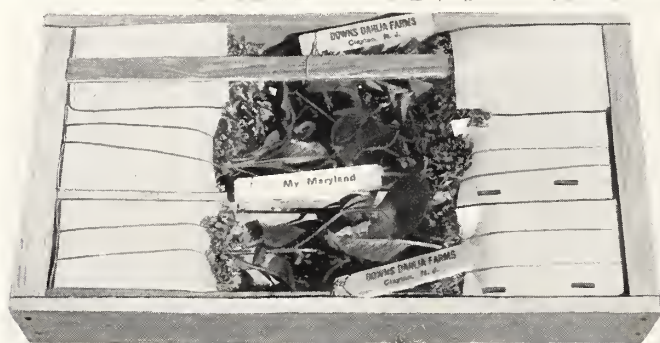


JANE COWL

A Dahlia Diary



A. September, when the Downs fields are a riot of glorious color. B. Six baby bushes packed in wooden cases for shipment. Note the arrangement of wooden sticks to keep the plants in place. See page 3. C. Two baby bushes, the one at the right planted in a paper flower pot, the one at the left planted in paper flower pot and enclosed in outer cardboard protective shell secured by rubber bands. See page 3. D. Four baby bushes packed in a strong corrugated carton. See page 3. E. Mr. Downs completely surrounded by Jane Cows. Compare the size of the blooms with the size of his head. F. A long row of beauties—thousands of potential prize winners.



B



C



D



E



F

~ A Dahlia Diary ~

JUNE 1

Here I am starting a diary again,—starting it in June. Funny time of year to start a diary, but most of mine have begun in the spring or early summer. I started my last diary when I met Geniveve; I stopped it when she married that German scientist and moved to Dusseldorf and became a hausfrau. She is “mutter” to two little Heinies now and she’s forgotten all about me.

And the diary before that—let’s see,—I started that on the day I met Claire. I burned that diary last spring on the day I saw Claire on Fifth Avenue and she looked right through me and down the street. Yes, she knew me all right, but the old leg was acting up and I was using a crutch, and Claire always was funny that way.

And the diary before that began shortly after I had met Amy. I started that in June, too. That was a long diary; it went on for years. I read it over not long ago, and it seems awfully silly now, though there were so many things in it I said I’d never forget and now I haven’t the faintest idea what they were. Amy was a wonderful girl. I think if I should ever meet her again we’d slip right back into the same groove and be good pals all over again. But I don’t suppose Amy and I will ever see each other. That’s the way in this world.

Yes, you’re right; the reason for starting this fourth diary is a girl, too. Only I haven’t met her yet. I haven’t the faintest idea what she’s like, but she looks—just ravishing. I saw her this morning; then I sent Togo over to Patchogue for a diary. He brought back an address book, but that will do. And now I’m starting a record of this new, strange, wonderful creature and my impressions and all that sort of thing. Perhaps, who knows, this diary may have a happy ending.

JUNE 2

I was so tired yesterday I wrote myself out. I haven’t seen her since yesterday morning, but I’d better go on with the story. You see, it’s like this. I’m marooned down here in Bellport ’til the dahlias start to bloom and maybe until the snow flies. I got out of the hospital just in time to ride on the turned-down top of an automobile in the Decoration Day parade and wave my crutch at the admiring multitude. That car-load lot of H. E. shell that I collected at the Hindenburg Line in 1918 bothers me periodically and when some

of it works up to the surface I have to go on the operating table and have it taken out. I can sell the collection I got last month to an antique dealer, guaranteed original, because it’s been in my leg for the past ten years. I had a bad time of it in the hospital this last trip and for some reason or other the doctors insist that I must loaf all summer, spare my leg as much as possible, stay out in the open and take things easy. So Togo and I have come down to Bellport. We arrived yesterday and then, when I looked out of the window, I saw her.

JUNE 3

I saw her again this morning. That fleeting glimpse I got of her the day before yesterday really wasn’t very accurate. Perhaps my imagination has been doing things, but I see her in another light today. She’s none the less interesting, but she interests me differently. Not quite so beautiful, perhaps, but with more “It” than I had dreamed of. There was something idyllic about it all. She was musing around in the garden with clumsy, flannel Five-And-Ten-Cent-Store gloves. She lives right next door to me and I suppose I could wander out and scrape an acquaintance right away, but that has never been my method. I must think up something more ingenious.

JUNE 4

Now I know what she’s planting; it’s dahlias. I thought they were potatoes at first; that shows how much of a gardener I am. But she brought over old Peter and they mused about together, and I overheard some of the conversation. Peter was all for planting the bulbs upright but she insisted that they be planted on their sides. She spoke of them as “tubers,” but Peter called them “bulbs.” I wonder which was right. I’m betting on the girl. Peter never was much on the English language.

JUNE 5

I wonder if Peter could introduce us. I’ve wasted a lot of time so far, but really this thing must proceed correctly. I object to pick-ups with a girl as lovely as she is, and I think she’d object to it also. Then, too, Peter seems hardly a proper sponsor. I wonder what I can do!



JUNE 6

I have it! The inspiration came this morning while I was shaving. I had just drawn down my long upper lip and had the razor poised for a devastating swipe, when pow! the idea struck me. I will become a dahlia farmer. I am going to grow dahlias. The biggest, bustingest, most heart-breaking dahlias that have ever been seen on Long Island. I will grow them in competition with hers, right on the other side of the hedge. When she sees my dahlias she'll have to scrape an acquaintance. It will be up to her; I won't push things.

Walked without the crutches today. Still a little shaky on the pins and had to use a cane, of course. I have always thought I was lucky that that shell got me only in the leg instead of higher up, but sometimes I wonder why it didn't miss me altogether.

JUNE 7

Mrs. Manners called. She made her usual terrible fuss over her wounded hero and stayed to tea, worse luck, but she did give me a hint. She said the Commodore and his wife grew the largest dahlias in town. I'll have to find out where he gets his tubers, (notice I didn't say "bulbs") and see what I can do. I haven't seen her for two days. The wind has been in the East and it has been raining. Bellport surely is a dismal place in the rain when you don't see her.

JUNE 8

I saw the Commodore today. They say his bark is worse than his bite, and I shouldn't be surprised. His bite may be very bad, but his bark certainly is terrible. He was boiling on down to the dock and I hailed him from the piazza. I said, "Commodore, where do you get your dahlia tubers?" He said, "Down!" to me just as if he were speaking to a dog, and continued on his way. They say his heart's in the right place, but I have my doubts.

I was hobbling on my side of the hedge in the afternoon when I saw her over the top of it. That hedge is very much too high. It will have to be trimmed. She was watering her dahlias. I was just getting up my courage to say something about her flowers (they haven't started to sprout yet, of course) when a car drew up in front of the house and she fluttered out to receive some guests. I disappeared. I wish I weren't so infernally conscious of this crippled leg. But there's one consolation: it's getting better daily.

JUNE 9

I met the Commodore again today. He didn't seem nearly so crusty. I was going to pass him by, but he stopped me and asked me if I would join his crew in some of the regattas. I said I might along about August on some day when it wasn't blowing too hard, but I'm not active enough yet for that sort of thing. His manner was so different that I dared ask him again about the dahlias. His answer was illuminating. He said, "I buy my tubers from

Downs." (and I had thought he had yelled "Down!" at me like a dog who has been too friendly). It seems that Downs is the name of a professional dahlia farmer in Clayton, New Jersey. The full name is Downs Dahlia Farms. The Commodore buys all his tubers there and grows the most amazing dahlias. He doesn't give them much attention, he says, but they grow like cabbages. I got off a letter to Downs after I came home.

Saw her again today—just a fleeting glimpse. It's the ninth of June and I haven't met her yet. I'm afraid I'm awfully slow. I wish I weren't so sensitive about this leg. That shell did more to my sprit than it did to my underpinning. You see, I'm either a poor cripple or a would-be hero, and I don't know which is worse. She is bound to ask me what has happened; they all do. And I don't know whether to tell her that I fell on the ice or was hit by a taxicab.

The wind is still in the East, and I'm using my crutches again.

JUNE 10

I had the most glorious opportunity today. Togo took me for a little drive in the flivver and as we came back I saw her on the front piazza. I made Togo go down and drive around the Yacht Club because I didn't want to appear before her with my crutches, and the old game leg is bad today. When we came back she had disappeared, so I got out and was just swinging through the gate when she bobbed up from behind the hedge. Her dog, a little Boston, was in my yard and she had followed in to call him. She had him in her arms, and he had smeared his big, puppy-like paws all over the front of her dress. She smiled. Gosh! I wish I could describe that smile! She said, "I'm afraid I'm trespassing; but this animal came into your yard and I was afraid he might do some damage. I'm very sorry." And I stood, swinging on my crutches, and I couldn't say a word! It was never that way with Genieve, or Claire or Amy. I grinned in a goofy sort of way and raised my hat, probably showing her that what hair I have is a bit gray, and while I was struggling to find some words the dog slipped out of her arms and ran down the street and she ran after him. Glorious, golden opportunity shot to pieces. I wonder when I can start growing those dahlias.

JUNE 11

Got a catalog from Downs today. It is a glorious thing. Printed in full color, and if I didn't have some ulterior motive, I think that catalog would make me a dahlia grower. There's a perfectly gorgeous decorative dahlia on the cover. It's called "Jane Cowl." I can't describe this flower, but the catalog does it very well. It reads in part as follows: "Just imagine the ideal dahlia bush—fairly tall, with vigorous, dark green, leather-thick foliage. Give it stems that are straight and strong, yet not clumsy. Then add monster blooms of glistening bronzy buff and salmon shades—blooms that will stop you every time you near



them—and you have a mental picture of our new dahlia, Jane Cowl. The color is as fine as anything in the dahlia world—a warm buff and old-gold, blending to a bright salmon at the perfect center. The flowers are immense, of a full-petaled decorative type, with just enough twist to the broad petals to add the touch of refinement. Jane Cowl is held on the stem just as it should be—looking at you, and slightly up. Some blooms are even set squarely on top of the stems, Insulinde-fashion.” (Whatever that means).

On the back of the catalog is another, called “My Maryland,” The catalog says it is a “large dahlia of clear, rich pink—a ‘different’ pink that defies description—with hardly a suggestion of lavender. Each petal is gracefully twisted and twirled, and daintily tipped with a touch of ivory that adds greatly to its charm.”

Then later it says, “The women love it! Few indeed are they who do not hide their noses in its center.” Well, I’ve made up my mind. I shall buy some Jane Cowl tubers; also some of My Maryland tubers. Get that—“the women love it.” I must have My Maryland. Personally, I think I prefer Jane Cowl.

JUNE 12

I sent off my order to Downs Dahlia Farms. They will probably think I’m going into competition with them. I ordered scads of tubers—Jane Cowl and My Maryland and a lot of others that appeal to me with funny names and glorious descriptions. I find that there are over six thousand named varieties of dahlias, but only a few types. The principal ones are the decorative, cactus and hybrid-cactus. I ordered tubers of every type, but principally decoratives. Then, too, I’ve ordered some baby bushes. The baby bushes are partly grown plants and (here’s the joy of it) they are already rooted and growing in pots. They do not cost as much as the tubers but, as the catalog says, “Just water them well when you set them out; keep the plants shaded (a peach-basket will do) during the hottest part of the first few days, and you will have dahlias already up, without waiting the week or two required by tubers.” It will be a week before my lady next door has anything to show for her pains. What a joy if I could beat her to it! There’s sense to this sort of competition. I haven’t seen her since that disastrous day when I gave her the goofy grin at the gate. Sometimes I’m so disgusted with myself. It is awful to be a fool.

The wind shifted to the South-west. Good old South-west wind blowing like sam-hill off the ocean, but warm and bland and typical of Long Island at its best. The leg is a thousand per cent better. I’ll try to promote myself to the cane tomorrow.

JUNE 13

Short thunder-storm this afternoon. I saw her for just a moment as she was shutting the windows. I wonder what she does with her days. She seems to have a lot of friends, for I hear the telephone ringing quite often and there are

cars buzzing up to the front door every day and all day. After all, I don’t think it’s right for an attractive girl to have too many “boy friends.” These young whippersnappers in their white flannels and picturesque sweaters are beginning to get on my nerves. I’m afraid I am getting on; a bit jealous of the younger generation, and that sort of thing will never do. Until this last trip to the hospital I thought of myself as part of the younger generation, and now I’m feeling very old and gray and forlorn. I really must get some ambition and courage and try to meet that girl. Walked with my stick today. Not so good.

JUNE 14

Joy of joys! Two great big husky packages from Downs Dahlia Farms. I opened them about the way I used to look in my stocking on Christmas. The Downs folks certainly seem to know how to do up plants for shipment. The packages were so nice I called Togo and made him bring my Kodak and I took some pictures of them. The little plants—the “baby bushes” as the catalog called them—had evidently been planted in clay flower pots and had been transferred into pretty little paper pots for shipment. These in turn were placed inside cardboard containers and held in place by strong elastic bands. Then they were packed six in a wooden box and each plant was held toward its own end of the box by means of a long stick that went from the bottom of the container to the other side of the box. I was very much impressed by this ingenious packing, as it’s perfectly evident that the plants could not move or be damaged no matter how roughly the box was treated in transit. Each plant held a wooden tag bearing the name Downs Dahlia Farms, Clayton, N. J., on one side and the variety of the dahlia on the other side I like the idea of the plants; they cost only half as much as the tubers and they are already growing. Now for the planting. I didn’t plant today because she wasn’t in sight. I know! I’ll get Peter to trim that hedge, then watch for her to tend her dahlias and I will plant them when I see her there.

JUNE 15

It is going gloriously. Togo saw Peter last night, and this morning I awoke to the merry snip-snip of his shears as they trimmed the ragged top of the hedge. Peter was rather disturbed because I wanted so much of the hedge cut off. He said he had been caring for that hedge for many years and he objected to our losing so much that had been grown so painstakingly. It never occurred to me before that you can judge the type of neighbors a man has by the height of his hedge. Tall hedge, bad neighbors; low hedge, good neighbors. Tall hedge, neighbors not particularly decorative, low hedge, neighbors easy to look at. I shall watch hedges hereafter with a new understanding.

After breakfast I had Togo spade up the garden. He spaded not wisely but too well. He turned it up way below our sandy top soil and it looked for a while as if he were digging a grave or a trench. I don’t like digging.



I had too much of it during a war I'm trying very hard to forget. Well, Togo worked industriously and well and Peter snip-snipped the hedge. He began as per orders, directly opposite my lady's dahlia bed. Then I went out and planted opposite her—dahlia for dahlia—all down my side of the hedge. I planted the tubers with a covering of about three inches—that was what Peter said to do and the baby bushes I put down with the clump of dirt from the pot buried just below the surface. Peter had dampened the soil in the pot to hold the dirt together. Yes, she was there. She came out with the watering pot and those funny flannel gloves. She doesn't wear a sunbonnet or the modern equivalent. She stood with her glorious bobbed head bare to the sun and worked opposite me like a good fellow. For the most part I worked on my hands and knees and there was no crutch or cane in evidence. Togo having dug the grave was dismissed to other duties. And then it began.

I can't for the life of me tell just how or where or when she started to talk. Funny, isn't it! I've written this whole diary to record my earliest impressions of this girl and yet I don't know who spoke first or what we said. We just talked, that was all. What did we talk about? Why dahlias, of course. After all, is there anything in the world so easy to talk about as dahlias? Why, I'm getting to be a dahlia fan! When I planted terrible looking tubers that looked like nothing in the world so much as misshapen potatoes, I could see Jane Cowl and My Mary-land sprout above the ground in great big blooms. And I planted them on the side. I gambled that my lady was right and Peter was wrong. Peter was clipping the hedge a good fifty feet away at that time, so he didn't interfere, but when she was looking—oh yes! that's how it started. When she was looking at me I planted the tubers vertically, and she said, "I beg your pardon, but tubers should be planted on their sides" and here is the indelible record in this diary. So many things happened, it was so glorious, I needn't write it down. I shall never forget it. Strange, I said that in the dairy of the Genivieve and Claire and Amy periods and I *have* forgotten. I have forgotten innumerable things I said I should never forget, but this time, I am sure, I shall never forget this whole day. She helped me to set them out, the tubers three feet apart in the rows, the rows four feet apart. The baby bushes at the same "interval." (I'm getting military again, it seems). And just as we were settling down to tell each other what our names were and how long we expected to stay at Bellport, a big car drove up before her gate and a patent-leather-haired young college boy waved to her with a tennis racket and she answered, "Yoo hoo, I'll be right there," and that was the end of the sunshine and the flowers and the twittering of the dicky birds, and I limped dismally into the house to the accompaniment of Peter's snip-snipping at the hedge.

JUNE 16

My baby bushes are six inches above the ground. Her's haven't shown their sprouts yet. I'll grow better dahlias

than she's growing. I have every faith in these Downs plants and tubers. The Downs folks are so devilish business-like in their dealings.

JUNE 17

Got a letter from the Downs Farms. Friendly sort of letter expressing great interest in what I am doing. I think they will be very helpful. They reminded me to keep the baby bushes shaded during the hot part of the day. There wasn't any hot part to this day. It was raw as June can sometimes be in Bellport. But I think I'll rig some sort of awning over the whole field. There are some old sails out in the barn; the spars, too; and I think I will rig up a sea-going awning, setting the mast on its side and hoisting my sail over a frame-work in the heat of the day.

JUNE 18

Rigged up the awning; it took all day. She came and watched me and seemed perfectly fascinated. I was a little afraid of that awning. If it blew, was afraid that my awning might sail away taking the lawn and the dahlias with it. When I got it all rigged, she asked, "What's the big idea?"

"Why, to shade the plants," I answered.

Her laugh was very disconcerting. "Why, a peach-basket would give enough shade for that, and you need it only in the middle of a very hot day and only for the first few days at that!"

Here was the opening I was seeking. Just as I was about to get very personal and find out who she was and how long she expected to stay in Bellport, that patent-leather-haired sheik appeared from nowhere, jumped over the hedge with one bound, broke off a baby bush—one of the Jane Cows, too—and butted into the conversation. He was taking her sailing. In two minutes she was gone, leaving me to take down that ridiculous, flapping awning and feeling as empty and stupid as an idiot. I think I have more to worry about than a game leg. Think of it: here's the eighteenth of June and I don't even know her name yet!

JUNE 19

She's gone! Can you conceive of anything so tragic? Just when things are going along so nicely! I saw her get into the car with a suitcase and a hat-box and drive away. I know she's going, somewhere for a long time. She wore a tailored suit and summer furs, a close-fitting little hat and gloves. No one wears gloves in Bellport unless they are going to town. She kissed her mother good-bye on the piazza. That is the first time I have seen her mother. Later in the day Steve came with his express wagon and took away a wardrobe trunk. I saw the initials; they are M. K. I haven't the faintest idea where she's going or how long she'll be gone.

JUNE 20

Mrs. Manners dropped in to see her hero again today. She is the most impossible old woman, but for one thing



I can be thankful. She dished up all the dirt. The girl next door is Marjory Keene. Her father and mother have been divorced, and Marjory lives for two months at a time with each parent. She has gone to visit her father in Newport and won't be back for two months. This is the last of my diary. I'll not make another entry in it until I see her again. Confound those dahlias, anyway! They are all I have to think about and every time I think about them I think about her. Miserable, scrawny little plants and a lot of things under ground that haven't shown their shoots yet. But they are something to think about, and for that I'm grateful. It just occurred to me today that perhaps I will show them at the Riverhead Fair. I'd like to join a dahlia club, but perhaps that is too ambitious for a beginner. The Riverhead Fair will do as a start. It's about the only kind of competition left to a poor cripple, but I mustn't start sympathizing with myself. That's terrible. See you when she gets back. Maybe.

AUGUST 27

I am starting up the diary again—that is significant. No, she hasn't returned, but this morning as I was rolling over in bed taking a last stretch and refusing to get up, I heard a great bumping and banging; and snatching aside my window curtain, I saw Steve bundling that wardrobe trunk out of the moving bungalow he calls his truck. And on it were the two initials, "M. K." Steve hitched it up onto his back and staggered in with it next door. That means she's coming back. Oh Marjory, you certainly have given me a lonesome summer. It started with so much promise and yet all I have had of you for two solid months is my memory of those few brief conversations snatched, as it were, across the hedge. I can see you still with your watering pot and your flannel gloves; and I can see you dashing away just when you were getting interesting and running off with that sheik with the patent-leather hair.

Well, I can thank you for those memories and I can thank you for the pleasure you have given me in my growing of the dahlias. They have certainly brought lots of sunshine into an otherwise gray and dreary summer. I may as well, right here and now, try to cover the two months that have elapsed so that we can bring the diary up to date and continue the story from the point where we left off. First of all, the old leg grew better. Suddenly and inexplicably the trouble cleared up. I went to bed one night with a very sharp pain, and the next morning it was gone. It hasn't bothered me since. Probably a piece of the shell was pressing on a nerve and it moved into a more comfortable berth. That happened about the last of June. Right after the 4th of July I disobeyed the doctor's orders, bought a commutation ticket and have been commuting to the city ever since. I resumed my practice and have had only the week-ends and the evenings here in Bellport. I got in a lot of sailing, quite a bit of golf, and a good deal of mixing with old friends who didn't mean much to me in the early part of the summer. Somehow friends and the crippled leg of a super-sensitive soul do

not seem to work well together, but now that I am feeling like my old self, I can mix as I used to. I have enjoyed the "ridin'" as never before. Heretofore I have dreaded the long trip on the 7:36 in the morning and the equally long trip back from town at night, but this year for the most part we have talked dahlias. The old Commodore has been very helpful. We ride together nearly every day and he has come around regularly and given me the finest hints imaginable on how to grow my plants. The dahlias have really taken very little care. After each rainstorm I had Togo go out and cultivate them. I expected that he would strike, for Togo is very proud of his professional standing as my "man" and does not want to be thought of as a Japanese gardener. But Togo seemed to like the work. It never took him more than an hour, and the cultivation prevented weeds and conserved the moisture in the soil. I was awfully discouraged at first. The bushes were terribly small, but then when they seemed to get going they sprouted up like Jack's beanstalk. About the middle of July the Commodore drove around with a big bundle of sticks which were about four feet long and an inch square. They were sharpened at one end and looked terribly professional.

"Looks to me as if we're going to get some weather," he said, "and if it comes on to blow it will raise Cain with your dahlia plants. They are about the size now when the wind will bother them, and they need support." So we drove a stake by each one of the plants. The Commodore was careful to drive the stakes on the side away from the road. I asked him why, and he insisted that the bushes as they grew would hide the stakes. But all the stakes that I drove were on the side farthest away from Marjory. I'm not planting these dahlias for the people who pass on the road. The stakes were driven about eight inches away from the base of each plant so as not to injure the roots. We drove the stakes for the tuber plants and the baby bushes alike, for by this time the plants grown from the tubers had caught up to the baby bushes. Each plant was carefully tied to its supporting stake. It was lucky we put out these stakes when we did, for that night it came on to blow from the Southeast. It was the tail end of that Florida hurricane that did so much damage along the coast, and four boats dragged their moorings and went ashore. The trees all down Bellport Lane were pretty well broken up, but my plants came through in good shape.

A couple of weeks later the Commodore visited me again. This time with a large sack of commercial fertilizer. I don't like fertilizer; it is nasty stuff. But the dahlias are worth the effort. The Commodore did the whole job in five minutes. It seems that he had learned the system the professional growers use, and he was very proud of his technique. He held a bucket in his left arm, grasped close to his side, and filled his right hand with the fertilizer and hurled the fertilizer through outstretched fingers, scattering it with a long, sweeping motion of his arm, near the base of the plants. I was a bit astonished at the fact that he did not heap it up around the stems, but he explained that the roots had by this time spread widely out from the



plants and by scattering the fertilizer he made it available to all the roots. It seems that the time for fertilizing is when the buds first appear. The plants were fertilized again about two weeks later. And there remains one more job of this to do at another two-weeks interval (or in about a week from now.) The second time we fertilized, we put the fertilizer on the opposite side of the plants from our first fertilization, and the next time we will go back and repeat what we did the first time.

The Commodore has explained to me many secrets of dahlia culture. I reproached myself because I had neglected to put on fertilizer when I first planted, but the Commodore didn't seem to think this procedure necessary. "If you want to grow big bushes," he growled, "use fertilizer early; but if you fertilize to make flowers and not bushes, use it when the buds appear." After all, I am growing flowers and am not particularly interested in the bushes. One important point the Commodore made is that you should use potato fertilizer—a good grade, of course. Both potatoes and tubers need potash, and all potato fertilizer has a high potash content. It seems that nearly all the professional dahlia growers use this potato fertilizer for the sake of its potash.

I never realized it before, but the practice of birth control and eugenics seems to obtain in dahlia culture. The Commodore has been at pains to explain the whole process known as "disbudding." This means killing off the weaker and less promising members of the family in order that the son and heir, as it were, may wax fat and prosper. Dahlia buds seem to come as triplets—one in the middle called the terminal bud, and two on the sides called lateral buds. The process of disbudding involves the slaughter of the innocents. The Commodore and Togo and I have been slaughtering the lateral buds by plucking them off for the last three weeks. This means one-third as many blooms, but all the strength and vigor and nourishment that would ordinarily go into the lateral buds is now concentrated in the terminal bud, thus forcing it into a bloom much larger than it would be ordinarily. There are also lateral shoots which appear above each leaf joint. If these are allowed to grow they will form branches each of which has some more buds. All lateral shoots within a foot or so of the top we plucked off with a quick downward jerk. We had to be careful to do this work cleanly and not to peel any of the skin from the stalk. The bushes have been growing lately at a perfectly stupendous rate. They are about four feet high, now, and they have begun to branch out, too. The Commodore says it's about time now to tie up these extra stalks, as the original tying is not sufficient to hold the plants upright in a strong wind. Some of the plants probably will have to be tied with two of three tyings, but most of them will do with only two.

I really didn't expect to write so much on the details of dahlia culture, but it has been so intensely interesting that I feel I have to write it down in the diary.

The Commodore has offered to care for my tubers for me during the winter. After the frost has killed the bushes I am to cut them off several inches above the ground and dig the roots. There will be many tubers on each bush. The tubers have to be kept from freezing but must not be kept in too warm a place.

And now we are all set for Marjory when she comes home. I don't think she came tonight. I was watching from the front piazza after the 6:18 and 7:35 arrived, and I am sure she was not on either train. Perhaps her trunk came ahead of time. I just feel confident that my dahlias will be much larger than hers. The bushes look stronger, the leaves seem thicker and more leathery, and the stalks seem strong and husky. Her bushes are a bit taller, but I am growing flowers, not bushes.

AUGUST 28

No Marjory today. I went to town, and I walked through the 4:35 after it left Penn Station. She wasn't on it, so I sat with the Commodore and talked about showing the dahlias at Riverhead. He shows his every year. He has won two ribbons, but never a blue. But this year he hopes for better luck. "By the way," says the Commodore, "I understand that your neighbor is planning to show dahlias at the Fair this year. She was talking about it before she went away in June." It looks as if the Fair would be very interesting this year.

AUGUST 29

Met Mrs. Manners and asked her point blank about Marjory. She told me that Marjory had stopped to see a school friend and will not be here until after Labor Day. Saw my first dahlia today. I confess it is a bit disappointing. It is just a plain, ordinary flower of pretty good size, but really nothing to write home about. I thought I was going to beat the world with my dahlias, but it may be that the weather has been too hot.

AUGUST 30

Quite a number of blooms on the stalks today. Marjory's haven't shown any color yet. I picked the dahlias that have bloomed, of course. Picking does them good. There is a bowl of them in the dining room. I wish that they were bigger and fuller, but perhaps it is too early for that.

AUGUST 31

It was a cold, snappy night, last night, with a northwest wind; and mist gathered in the hollows. When Togo met me at the train he brought an overcoat, and I was glad of it. I think the cold weather will do wonders for the dahlias. This is the second cold night in succession.

Sailed on the Commodore's boat today and got the gun at the finish but lost out on time allowance. Two more days and Marjory will be home.



SEPTEMBER 1

Another cold night last night. The dahlias are beginning to come out in good shape. Marjory's, too. But as I stood today and looked first on one side of the hedge and then on the other, I was utterly astounded at the difference. I thought my dahlias were poor. They are a lot better than they were last week. But even the first ones that showed last week were so different from those on her side of the hedge that they seem like a different genus. These big, glorious blooms of mine can no more be compared to the doorknobs she is growing on her stalks than you can compare a truckhorse with a pomeranian. Of course, Marjory has been away and has not had much chance to take care of her bushes, but Peter has been faithful and has probably cared for them more intelligently than such amateurs as Togo and I. It is probably in the stock, after all. These Downs tubers are prize winners almost everywhere they are shown, and certainly when Marjory comes home tomorrow she will be quick to come to my side of the hedge and remark on the difference. I hope I don't gloat too obviously.

SEPTEMBER 2—LABOR DAY

She's home. She arrived this morning and she looked terribly trim and citified, but ten minutes after she had greeted her mother and disappeared with her into the house, she was out in the dahlia patch looking over her flowers. I watched her from behind the blinds. She seemed quite happy until her eyes fell on my side of the hedge. Then she seemed utterly rooted to the spot. That was the time to make my appearance. Well, the dahlias have done their stuff. In three minutes Marjory and I were both on the same side of the hedge—my side—and we were there among the flowers for nearly an hour. There is no use writing down all that happened, but the upshot of it all was this: Marjory has decided that her flowers are too poor to show at Riverhead, and she is going to help me show my entries. I know she will arrange them to best advantage.

It's the strangest thing, the way this diary has turned out. I started it, you know, to write down my impressions of Marjory. And here it has turned into a regular treatise on dahlias. I suppose that when I write a diary—no matter how I swear it is for my eyes alone—I always picture other readers. And I just can't put down all that I feel about that girl.

SEPTEMBER 10

Eight whole days since I have made an entry in the diary. They have been glorious days. I have been calling Miss Keene "Marjory" for the last four of them, and she calls me "Jack."

Marjory, girl, I certainly know my feelings about you now. I love you. That says everything. That is the beginning and the end—

"The desire of the moth for the star
"Of the night for the morrow
"The devotion to something afar
"From the sphere of our sorrow."

No, not even Shelley can say it. I am stricken so dumb in the presence of this overpowering emotion that even here, now, in the dead of night, I can't find a word to express it. And how can I ever tell Marjory?

SEPTEMBER 11

Today Marjory and I planned our selection for the Riverhead Fair. We are going to lead off with Jane Cowl. If we get nothing else we ought to win the prize for the biggest dahlia in the show. Jane Cows are growing twelve and more inches in diameter now.

Spent all afternoon with Marjory today. Went sailing right after lunch. There was a fine, steady, full-sail breeze and lots of sunshine. We walked home from the shore together and went to look at the dahlias. Seems as if no matter where we go we always end up looking at the dahlias. Today we selected the ones we're going to exhibit at the fair.

We'll show My Maryland, of course. Downs said, "Women love it." So I bought it, thinking of Marjory. And she does love it. "Just leaves me breathless, that dahlia," she said today. "Such an exquisite pink! And those twirled petals with their ivory tips! Why aren't you an artist, Jack, to paint it for me so I could look at it all winter? And you could paint me a Jane Cowl, too. But no; no, on second thought I wouldn't let you paint either of them. I want always to have them as something to look forward to each fall. No artist could do them justice, anyhow," and she buried her face in a Jane Cowl. From where I stood the bloom seemed a golden halo around her hair.

Marjory took her head out of the bloom and looked at the other dahlias. "How would you like to be in a dahlia beauty contest, Emma Marie?" she asked one of them, a hybrid cactus. Emma Marie's blossoms are a clear, lovely pink around a full center of cream. They are very deep, and Togo is fond of them because they last so long in water.

"How about Pop Stewart?" I asked. "He's one of your favorites, isn't he?"

"Pop Stewart," she meditated, and examined one of the flowers. "Unusual color," she said. "Lilac-pink. Decorative. Medium-large; full center. Very free blooming." She smiled at me suddenly and queried proudly, "Don't I sound professional?"

"Very. I'm proud of you," I told her. "Do it some more."

"Kemp's Violet Wonder;" she pointed to another bush. "Impressive blooms of rich violet, with an underlying tone of royal purple. A true decorative of huge and massive proportions, on strong stems well above the tall plant. A winner in the American Dahlia Society Show. And," she



hurried on before I could say a word, "this is Marmion. A masterpiece. Immense blooms of golden yellow with a bronze suffusion and a deeper bronze in the full, high center. One of the largest decorative varieties, of excellent formation. Long, straight stems and good plant. May be classed with the best."

"Now I *know* you're quoting Down's," I told her as she stopped for breath. "Little gyp!" She laughed merrily, and coming to where I stood pulled a very crinkled Downs pamphlet out of her sweater pocket. "Please, sir, may I recite to you?" she asked mischievously.

I took the leaflet and looked at her in as schoolmaster-ishly a way as I suppose I ever will be able to look at Marjory. "Glory of Monmouth," I read. She walked to a bush of deep green dotted like a gay clown's costume with big brilliant disks.

"Glory of Monmouth. Wonderful garden and exhibition decorative, with petals of heavy texture that blend from a base of light orange to shades of strawberry-pink."

"You get an A on that. Waldheim Sunshine?"

"No credit to me in this really" she disclaimed. "All you have to do is look at them and it all comes back to you. However—Waldheim Sunshine is a huge deep yellow decorative with twisted, wavy petals that relieve the immense size from stiffness. I think that bloom there is a foot across!"

"Measured it yesterday; it's eleven and a half inches. Sanhican's Bluebird is next, please."

She seemed immersed in thought. "Sanhican's Bluebird," I repeated in a louder tone.

"You know," she said quite as if I'd never spoken, "you know I'm glad you planted Jersey's Beacon next to the World's Best White. J. B.'s gorgeous balls of Chinese scarlet against the clean white of the World's Best—Striking! Of course, the World's Best is one of the finest decorative white dahlias produced. I got that bit from the Commodore. We discuss your flowers quite frequently. He says it's a fine exhibition flower, too. Don't you think we should show it at the Fair?"

"You've neglected Rollo Boy" I reminded her.

"Oh, yes," she said, "Rollo Boy," and examined the large hybrid cactus blooms of delicate amber and old gold. "Well, just so he won't feel too neglected, I'll take one of the blooms home with me. The last bunch you gave me lasted ever so long, and I like them on that walnut table."

She picked a Sanhican's Bluebird as she passed it. Said it would look well with the gold Rollo Boys and asked me if I had ever seen such a beautiful violet-blue. "Yes," I answered, thinking of her eyes.

It took quite a while to decide which we'd show—of course, I prolonged the discussion as long as I could—but by the time she had to go in for dinner we'd about decided.

The following pages were written on sheets of a pad slightly larger than the diary and were pasted into the book. Editor.

SEPTEMBER 13

Friday the thirteenth! Surely my unlucky day. I am still simply dazed by the terrible misfortune that has befallen me! Somehow, somewhere, I have lost my diary!

I've looked everywhere. It is after midnight, and Togo and I have turned the whole place upside down without finding a single clue. Think what this means! To lose an intimate book of confessions in Bellport—where everyone minds everyone else's business!

Perhaps it is being read aloud this minute to some drunken party at the Country Club. Everyone will hear of it before it gets to Marjory. And Marjory will hear of it before it comes back to me. What can I do? Shall I run away and leave Marjory and the dahlias and the cruel laughter, or shall I stick it out?

SEPTEMBER 14

Entry blanks came today. I filled them out and returned them. The Fair is on the 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th.

I walked to the Post Office today alert for laughter. I went to Old Inlet Beach on the ferry and watched and listened. I got into my bathing suit in the men's court and walked out and listened just beyond the fence to eavesdrop on any nasty wise cracks. But nothing happened. Quite evidently Bellport has not found the diary.

I have gone over the top in Flanders after a nerve-racking artillery preparation—but it seemed easy compared with sauntering to a village post office and asking with Muradian nonchalance for my mail.

SEPTEMBER 15

Something has happened to Marjory. She looks at me in such a strange way. She seems so serious and so—yes, that is the word—tender. She seems to be waiting—waiting.

SEPTEMBER 16

No sign of the diary. No laughter, no jeers. I'm going to forget it, but I'll keep right on praying.

SEPTEMBER 17

I wonder if Marjory would marry me if I could get up courage to ask her. I never conceived it possible before, but I am beginning to think she cares. Today—I can't write it, but I am sure I'll never forget it.

SEPTEMBER 18

I really think she cares a whole lot.

SEPTEMBER 19

I almost asked her tonight. There was a moon and we went for a drive in the flivver. We took that little dirt road down to the bay at Brookhaven and watched the moonlight dance on the water. I was just afraid that she might think the beauty of it all turned my head—that I was in love with love—so I said nothing.



SEPTEMBER 20

It's strange. I love Marjory as I never dreamed a man could love and yet I cannot tell her of it. In all our intimacy there has been no word of endearment, no "petting." Somehow this love is too sacred—it means too much.

SEPTEMBER 21

A terrible Easter all day. Rain and dreariness, the equinoxial storm in all its fury. Boats dragging their anchors, serious automobile accident in Patchogue, trees uprooted, damage and disaster everywhere.

The dahlias are suffering badly. I am thankful for their strong stalks and thick leathery leaves. They help greatly, but it is a terrible storm.

SEPTEMBER 22

Still storming. These equinoxial storms generally last three days. The Commodore phoned tonight to say he is definitely out of the Riverhead Fair. His place on Howell's Point is so terribly exposed to the storm that the damage to his blooms is irreparable.

SEPTEMBER 23

It cleared about noon today. Marjory and I surveyed the wreck of my dahlia patch. I've decided not to enter the "best dozen" competition. There do not seem to be enough good blooms left to collect a dozen beauties of a kind. My only hope is this—that storm was not local. It has raised Cain all up and down the coast, and probably I have fared no worse than any other grower.

SEPTEMBER 24

We picked the flowers for the show today. The Commodore said they should be kept cool and dark, so we put them in tall jars of water in the cellar.

I have learned one trick that will prove valuable. This is a stunt to keep the blooms fresh after they are cut. When they are picked, I cut them just below a node of the stem. Then, if they start to fade, I put them in fresh water and cut the stems *under water*, just above the node. An air bubble escapes, and water surges up the stems to freshen the blooms.

The next entry appears written in the diary itself—not on a separate sheet pasted in.—Editor

SEPTEMBER 26

This is the last entry in my diary. This is the end of two histories—the story of my dahlias and of the love affair that has wound itself inseparably with them.

Marjory and I carried out our schedule according to plan. We found our allotted station at the Fair shortly after nine o'clock. When I looked around at the other exhibits, I felt pretty confident.

Then we fell to work. A great big buster of a Jane Cowl was placed in the center of our space. Surrounding it, we arranged smaller flowers to make its size more apparent by contrast. Marjory produced a small black screen with three leaves which she used as a back-ground for this one perfect bloom.

At one end of our space were three Jane Cows in competition for the "Best bunch of three decoratives" and at the other end were six My Marylands entered in the competition for the "Best bunch of six hybrid-cactuses."

About eleven o'clock the judges came through. A bit of measuring, a bit of comparing, and then they were gone. No comment to me. I thought it was all over.

Presently one of them returned with a large white dahlia from another display, held it for a moment beside my Jane Cowl and was gone again. Something on the other side of the building attracted my attention for a few minutes, and when I turned around once more the judges were walking away and three blue ribbons were decorating my display.

Afterwards I learned that the big Jane Cowl, largest flower in the Fair, measured officially $13\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter. The other two prizes were for the best bunch of three decoratives, won by Jane Cowl, the best bunch of six hybrid-cactuses won by My Maryland. I think I could have won in the cactus class if I had entered them, and but for the storm I might have won a "best dozen" or "best twenty-five" class.

But three blue ribbons for a rank beginner is a pretty good day's work. We were very happy. At five o'clock we started the long drive home to Bellport.

And then it happened—as we were driving into a flaming sunset.

"Marjory"—I began.

There was something electric in her name—something seemed to flash between us like a swift, long beam of light.

"I know what you're going to say, Jack."

"How?" I breathed.

"I found your diary —"

My cheeks flushed with mortification. The flivver, of its own accord, pulled to the side of the road and stopped. "You didn't read it!" It was Marjory's turn to be embarrassed.

"It was open to a page that was all about me. I thought—I thought, Jack, that you had lost it on purpose—that you had intended I should find it—and read it. I did read it—all of it."

"You know then—you know how I love you!"

"Yes, Jack."

"And —"

"And I know too that ——— I love you."

It must have been some time later when that small boy driving three cows before him into the dark shrilled out the words, "Oh, you neckers!"



New Introductions

We cannot possibly see or offer all the new varieties produced each year, and no doubt we miss many fine ones. The dahlias listed below were bought by us because of their undoubted excellence and because of our belief that they will appeal to the majority of our customers. Plants only; no tubers.

A. O. Kenny. (Darling.) Large flowers of perfect form and great depth, carried on good stems. Color, a rich bronze buff shade of one tone, with the center tinted with bronze.

Plants \$7.50

Coquette. (Sanhican.) In this robust decorative we have a beautiful combination of red and gold. The thick fluffy flower, with its many curled and twisted petals, gives the impression of a glowing sunset.

Plants \$5.00

Datso. (Cottam.) This is a large well formed decorative of glowing deep rose-pink color. The stems are perfect and the foliage is lustrous and leathery.

Plants \$5.00

Derrill W. Hart. (Broomall-Success.) A real autumn-colored decorative; copper shading to henna and brown.

Plants \$7.50

Jersey's Glory. (Waite.) A large decorative of good form, with blooms of a yellow hue of orange. A robust grower, and blooms abundantly.

Plants \$5.00

Kathleen Norris (Sanhican.) A bloom of gigantic proportions—true rose pink, later deepening to mallow pink. It was awarded first prize as the best flower in four great Eastern Shows in addition to innumerable other awards as an undisseminated seedling.

Plants \$7.50

King Midas. (Peacock.) A true decorative of clear rich golden yellow. This is an ideal yellow Dahlia for all purposes.

Plants \$10.00

Lavender Gem. (Sanhican.) Very thick decorative blooms, with petals terminating in curled points. Early and free flowering, with the pure lavender blooms held on stiff stems.

Plants \$3.75

Mrs. Alfred B. Seal. (Seal.) A Dahlia of unusual color—absolutely pure rich glowing old rose. Large deep decorative blooms held proudly erect over a fine bush.

Plants \$12.50

Mrs. Edward Winsor. (Sanhican.) An immense fluffy decorative of golden old rose, held high above dark green leathery foliage.

Plants \$5.00

Mrs. Shirley Shaw. (Broomall-Success.) A broad petaled, heavy textured hybrid cactus of upright regal appearance.

Plants \$7.50

Mrs. Horace Mann. (Sanhican.) Many narrow, curled and twisted petals of rich salmon, so evenly spaced that they form a perfect molding of a beautiful round flower.

Plants \$3.75

Pinwheel. (Peacock.) Crimson purple, each petal tipped with white. In addition to the whorled form, the back petals reflex to the stem. Striking and fantastic, greatly resembling a pinwheel.

Plants \$5.00

Romance. (Schling.) Well shaped, massive flowers of great depth, of a lovely rich clear pink, charmingly interblended with lighter pink.

Plants \$7.50

Sanhican's Queen. (Sanhican.) Indescribable shades of carmine rose, deepening toward the tight center. Excellent habit, with the rigid stem carrying the flower well above the foliage.

Plants \$3.75

Seal's Californian. (Seal.) Blooms so perfect as to seem almost of wax. The bright golden yellow centers shade to lighter yellow outer petals whose tips are rosy bronze. Decorative.

Plants \$5.00

The World. (Dahliadel.) The coloring is unusual—rich deep rosy magenta overlaid garnet with silver shadings on edges of petals. A rich and beautiful combination of colors. Perfect, full centers, 8 to 10 inches across and half as deep.

Plants \$5.00

Treasure Island. (Dahliadel.) Color, bright apricot with gold and rose suffusion and shadings. Flowers are held erect with full centers throughout the season. A Dahlia that will score high, both early and late in the season.

Plants \$5.00

Ty Cobb. (Peacock.) Hybrid decorative. Richest glowing crimson, shaded velvety maroon. This variety was selected by Ty Cobb, who in addition to being the greatest and most colorful ball player of all time, is an ardent Dahlia enthusiast.

Plants \$5.00

Yellow Beauty. (Wood.) Decorative, pure empire yellow in color. Splendid habit and style of growth. A seedling of Jersey's Beauty and possessing all the good points of its parent. This is one of the best new cut flower varieties that has been offered in years.

Plants \$7.50

Our Own Introductions

Jane Cowl. Just imagine the ideal Dahlia bush—fairly tall, with vigorous, dark green, leather-thick foliage. Give it stems that are straight and strong, yet not clumsy. Then add monster blooms of glistening bronzy buff and salmon shades—blooms that will stop you every time you near them—and you have a mental picture of our own Jane Cowl. Jane Cowl is held on the stem just as it should be—looking at you and slightly up. Some blooms are even set squarely on top of the stem, Insulinde fashion. The flowers are immense, of the full petaled decorative type, with just enough twist to the broad petals to add the touch of refinement. Continuing its sensational success as a seedling, Jane Cowl won more prizes last season than any other 1928 introduction—including in its triumphs at least two foreign countries. It has been called the world's "most perfect Dahlia." (See front cover.)

Tubers \$10.00; Plants \$5.00

My Maryland. A beautiful Dahlia of clear rich pink, with hardly a suggestion of lavender. The women love it! Few indeed are they who do not hide their noses in its center. Each petal is gracefully twisted and twirled, and daintily tipped with a touch of ivory that adds greatly to its charm. (See back cover.) Fairly tall, with foliage of insect-resisting thickness, My Maryland is one of the healthiest varieties we grow. The stems are straight and strong, yet graceful, and hold the large bloom in an ideal position. As a seedling, this Dahlia won first prize at the Atlantic City Show of the New Jersey Dahlia Society, and, at the same Show, won the Achievement Medal. It also won as the best undisseminated hybrid-cactus seedling at the New York Show. It was awarded a Certificate of Merit and was listed on the Roll of Honor.

Tubers \$10.00; Plants \$5.00



Plants and Tubers

All tubers listed below are guaranteed firm, plump and ready to sprout when planted. The plants (baby bushes) afford a considerable saving to anyone who can give them the slight additional care (shading) they require during the hottest part of the first few days. Last season we shipped plants successfully as far away as the state of Washington. See illustrations of plants packed for shipment on inside front cover of this booklet.

Adda Patterson. (Kemp.) A very good white hybrid cactus. The blooms are large and held well above the tall bush on straight, stiff stems. It keeps very well when cut. **Tubers \$3.50**

Adeline C. Lorbeer. (Broomall.) One of the best red cactus Dahlias—clear spectrum red, without shading. The plant is medium tall and holds the blooms on fine stems.
Tubers \$3.00; Plants \$1.50

Alice Whittier. A beautiful cactus Dahlia of clear light yellow. Very large in size, with the many blooms held on excellent stems over a tall and vigorous bush. **Tubers \$2.50**

Amarillo Grande. (Broomall.) Unusually large decorative blooms of light yellow. The bush is strong and the stem is good, making a very satisfactory Dahlia in every way.
Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25

Ambassador. Peaches and cream, mostly cream. This immense cactus Dahlia was sold for \$50 when first introduced, and has won innumerable prizes. **Tuber \$.75**

Aztec Glory. (Broomall-Success.) One lady, passing through our field, found this variety. "Oh look," she called to her husband, "here's a whole dish of cold slaw." A very large decorative—one of those really BIG fellows—rich clear golden yellow in color, without tints or blends. The blooms are held erect on excellent stems. It makes a wonderful exhibition variety. It won at the New Jersey Dahlia Society's Atlantic City Show as the best Dahlia of California origin. **Plants \$3.75**

Barbara Redfern. (Redfern.) A free-blooming decorative of great size and depth. The color is a beautiful blend of old-rose and old-gold. The large blooms are held on strong, stiff stems on a tall, vigorous bush. This Dahlia keeps well when cut. **Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50**

Barbara Wear. (Seal.) Soft pinkish lavender, with petals shading to cream at outer ends. Deep good sized blooms on long straight stems. **Tubers \$7.50; Plants \$3.75**

Betty Ivins. (Sanhican.) A decorative of huge proportions. Color: Rich salmon, overlaid with an amber glow. **Plants \$3.75**

Bonnie Brae. An enormous decorative, so large its wiry stem cannot hold it erect. The color of cream, with pink shadings. **Tubers \$.50**

Casper G. Ware. (Dahliadel.) Very free bloomer, with flowers of attractive violet-rose and shades of pink. Its blooming qualities, dainty coloring, and long life after being picked make it of great promise as a cut-flower. **Tubers \$2.00**

Champagne. A stately flower. Chamois in a light golden shade, growing darker toward the center. This is a decorative of good size, with excellent bush habits and fine stems. **Tubers \$.75**

Chemar's Purity. (Marsh.) A white decorative with a yellowish tinge, full centered, and a seedling from Jersey's Beauty!
Tubers \$7.50; Plants \$3.75

City of Lawrence. An enormous yellow decorative—in depth as well as diameter. A free-blooming variety with good stems and a strong, husky plant. **Tubers \$1.00; Plants \$.50**

Col. Chas. A. Lindbergh. (Sanhican.) Rose, overlaid and suffused with old ivory, shading off to pale gold at center. Hybrid cactus. **Plants \$3.75**

Color Sergeant. (Lyndora.) A striking decorative of rich deep salmon-bronze. It was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the New Jersey Dahlia Society. **Plants \$3.75**

Eagle Rock Beauty. (Broomall.) Pink and cream in a glorious combination! Monster, well-formed decorative blooms that are full to the center, with petals reflexing toward the stem. A prolific bloomer of giant size, yet artistic.
Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50

Earle Williams. Rich scarlet petals, tipped with white. Sometimes the blooms are all scarlet. Either way, this large decorative is a beautiful flower. **Tubers \$.75**

Eastern Star. (Dahliadel.) A decorative of beautiful saffron-yellow, shading to old-gold—very effective in mass. The full-centered blooms have great substance, and keep very well when used as cut-flowers. It was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Dahlia Society of New Jersey.
Tubers \$2.00; Plants \$1.00

Edna Ferber. (Sanhican.) One of our largest. A hybrid cactus of huge size, with petals curled and twisted to make a very full flower. Its color—a glistening coral shading to old-gold at the base of the petals—makes it one of the first to attract attention, both in the field and at the shows. It has won many prizes.
Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50

El Dorado. Of golden yellow, with amber shadings, this decorative has attracted considerable attention at Dahlia shows. It keeps very well, has a fine stem that is unusually stiff and is one of the best for commercial uses. **Tubers \$.75**

Eliza Clarke Bull. (Boston.) An immense white decorative. It blooms freely on an excellent stem that holds the flower well above plants of medium height. This large deep Dahlia is one of those always in demand. **Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25**

Emma Marie. (Dahliadel.) Clear pink of lovely shade around a creamy white center. A deep, full-centered, beautifully formed hybrid cactus bloom. The flowers are borne very freely on a robust bush with excellent stems. The roots are splendid keepers, and it is one of our best cut-flower varieties.
Tubers \$1.00; Plants \$.50

Fort Monmouth. (Kemp.) A gigantic, long-petaled hybrid cactus of spectacular rich claret, with a brightness unusual in red Dahlias—and it never burns. Of immense size and wonderful formation, this bloom is held on stiff stem over a tall, strong-growing bush. It flowers freely and keeps well when cut. **Tubers \$10.00; Plants \$5.00**

Fort Washington. This is a very large decorative of dark maroon. The bushes are tall and robust, with stems that are long and straight. It is an exceptionally good exhibition variety.
Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50



F. W. Fellows. This beauty of orange-scarlet is larger than many a better known cactus. Its long, tightly twisted petals are incurved over a perfect center. We grow this for ourselves—just because we like it. **Tubers \$.75**

Galli-Curci. (Lyndora.) A curly petaled decorative of extreme grace and charm, very beautiful in color—a rich salmon-orange, intensified with tints of gold. At the Camden Show of the New Jersey Dahlia Society, it won as the best undisseeded seedling, and at the Atlantic City Show of the same Society, Mme. Galli-Curci chose it to be named for her. **Tubers \$10.00; Plants \$5.00**

George Walters. Old gold, deep rose and salmon, blended. The biggest bloom we know of for the money. **Tubers \$.50**

Glory of Monmouth. (Kemp.) Wonderful garden and exhibition decorative, with petals that blend from a base of light orange to shades of strawberry-pink. The blooms are of moderate size and held over a medium bush on long, stiff stems. A good keeping variety with slowly opening petals of heavy texture. **Tubers \$3.50; Plants \$1.75**

Grandola. (Broomall.) This brilliant orange decorative of medium size was considered one of its originator's most beautiful introductions for 1926. **Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25**

Harry Mayer. (Success.) One of the finest Dahlias for exhibition. The color is a beautiful silvery pink, with a deeper rose pink reverse. It has splendid habits and erect stems, with vigorous, dark green foliage. **Tubers \$7.50; Plants \$3.75**

Harry Sheldon, Jr. White, with an outside row of delicate shell pink petals. A dainty decorative, on a vigorous bush of spreading habit. It flowers profusely. **Tubers \$1.50**

Hathor. (Seal.) One of the newest California varieties. A decorative of excellent form with vivid Oriental coloring—brilliant salmon, with orange, ivory, and gold shadings that defy description. **Tubers \$3.00; Plants \$1.50**

Ida Perkins. (Perkins-Montrose.) A pure white decorative, finely formed and with a substance of petal that makes it keep very well when cut. Upright and sturdy, this clean-growing Dahlia is probably one of the best whites yet introduced. This variety was a winner of the Achievement Medal at the Boston Dahlia Show. **Tubers \$7.50; Plants \$3.75**

Insulinde. Beautiful blooms of bronzy old-gold, held on top the stem umbrella fashion. A large decorative, unique in shape, with the outer petals dropping not unlike an Iris. A good bloomer, and worth several times **\$.75**

Islam Patrol. Scarlet and gold—golden tips on scarlet petals. With its glorious coloring, great vigor and fine blooming qualities, this is one of our favorite hybrid-cactus Dahlias. **Tubers \$1.00**

Jack O'Lantern. (Success.) Brilliant orange and rich red—the center petals tipped gold. With large blooms of this vivid coloring held erect on a vigorous bush, this beautiful decorative attracts attention everywhere. It was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Dahlia Society of New Jersey. **Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50**

Jersey's Beacon. Chinese scarlet, with a paler reverse, which gives an unusual two-toned effect. A decorative almost globular in form, and of very good size. **Tubers \$1.25; Plants \$.75**

Jersey's Beauty. Being an excellent keeper and beautiful pink in color, this is the most popular cut-flower variety in many markets. A decorative, with stem, bush and color to commend it. **Tuber \$.75**

Jersey's Daybreak. (Waite.) A beauty of pastel coloring—soft pink and ivory-white, but predominantly pink. This Dahlia is of splendid formation, with long, stiff stems holding the blooms over thick, leathery foliage. **Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50**

Jersey's Gem. Another one of the famous "Jersey" group—a decorative of delicate lavender pink that is extremely effective when arranged with white varieties. Has a fine stem, too. **Tubers \$.75**

Jersey's Jewel. Long petals of clear pink. A decorative, large and with good habits; but not, with us, a prolific bloomer. **Tubers \$1.00**

Jersey's Masterpiece. (Waite.) Large blooms of brilliant apricot, with tints of orange; very deep, with long, graceful petals and a formation similar to Insulinde. The many flowers are carried on strong, cane-like stems, and the foliage is of good texture. **Tubers \$10.00; Plants \$5.00**

Judge Marean. A large beauty of salmon pink and golden yellow, beautifully blended. A prolific blooming variety, of the decorative type, on stiff, wiry stems. **Tubers \$.75**

Kalif. A bright scarlet Dahlia of the hybrid-cactus type. The good-sized blooms are borne very freely. They keep well, have fine stems, and are excellent for commercial uses. **Tubers \$.50**

Kemp's Violet Wonder. (Kemp.) Impressive blooms of rich violet, with an underlying tone of royal purple. A true decorative of massive proportions, borne on strong stems well above the tall plant. This remarkable Dahlia has been Certified, and was a winner in the last show of the American Dahlia Society in New York. **Tubers \$10.00; Plants \$5.00**

La Roda. (Broomall.) A large, well formed flower of silvery rose pink on strong stems. **Tubers \$10.00; Plants \$5.00**

Lolita Velasco. (Boston.) Pure white in color, almost perfect in form, and with firm textured petals that make it keep a long time. This artistic, narrow-petaled cactus is one of the best of its type. **Tubers \$.75**

Margaret Woodrow Wilson. (Sanhican.) An exhibition decorative, large and of great beauty. The pink on the reverse of the petals, reflecting on the white face gives an exquisitely opalescent effect. **Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25**

Mariposa. The incurved petals of this perfectly formed hybrid-cactus are of delicate pink, often flushed violet and giving the effect of lavender. Large flowers on straight, strong stems. **Tubers \$.75**

Marion Broomall. (Broomall.) Pink and white and beautiful! A hybrid cactus of large size that should be in every garden. **Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25**

Marmion. (Mastick.) Immense blooms of golden yellow with a bronze suffusion, and a deeper bronze in the full, high center. One of the largest decorative varieties, of excellent formation. Its long straight stems and good plant may be classed with the best. This was one of the highest scoring Dahlias at the Trial-Grounds, and has won many prizes. **Tubers \$3.50; Plants \$1.75**

Martha Kemp. (Kemp.) Warm buff in color, shading to apricot-yellow. These very deep blooms are of good size and borne on fine stems on a plant of great vigor. Their good keeping qualities make them very desirable for house decoration because their petals never drop. **Plants \$3.75**

Mirafloza. (Broomall.) Violet-pink, with tints of white. The petals are long, narrow, and almost straight. It blooms very freely on good strong stems, and is one of the largest cactus Dahlias. **Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25**



Mr. Alexander Waldie. In color similar to Bonnie Brae. It has a better stem than that variety, though it is not quite so large. A decorative. **Tubers \$.75**

Mrs. Carl Salbach. Soft rose pink blooms, flushing lavender—and many of them. This decorative keeps very well when cut, and has long, stiff, straight stems that do not require disbudding. **Tubers \$.50**

Mrs. I. deVer Warner. This clear lilac-rose decorative is remarkable for its purity of color. The plant is vigorous and prolific, bearing many large, long-keeping blooms on fine stems. Taken all around, this is one of the best Dahlias of moderate price. **Tubers \$.50**

Nancy Sue Lang. (Broomall.) Striking hybrid decorative with the color a combination of red, copper, and gold. A giant in size and of star-like formation, on a plant not tall but very robust. The stems are all that can be desired. **Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50**

Papillon. (Boston.) This beautiful hybrid cactus is old-rose, with a golden suffusion. The blooms are large, on a medium tall bush which is very prolific. **Tubers \$1.00**

Paul Michael. A big decorative, almost the color of gold. Blooms of this variety often reach ten inches across. A fine garden Dahlia, but not the best of keepers after being cut. **Tubers \$.75**

Pop Stewart. (Sanhican.) Marvelous in coloring—an exquisite shade of lilac-pink. It is a decorative of medium-large size, but can be grown large by fertilizing and disbudding. Having full centers, ordinarily, unusual coloring, great stems, and free-blooming qualities, it makes one of the best varieties for cut-flowers. It has been Certificated by the Dahlia Society of New Jersey and has won many prizes. **Tubers \$1.50; Plants \$.75**

Primula Rex. (Broomall.) Immense in size, and one of the best. A decorative of very bright cream color. The medium to tall plant is a very profuse bloomer. With every other good quality to commend it, this is also one of the largest Dahlias, and should be in every garden. **Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25**

Queen of the Garden Beautiful. (Burns.) A gigantic decorative of very distinctive form. Primrose-yellow in color, with full centers and excellent stems. This is a Dahlia of real merit, and has won a great many prizes. A great Dahlia for exhibition at shows. **Tubers \$2.50; Plants \$1.25**

Richlieu. (Redfern.) A large wide-petaled decorative of deep velvety red, held regally erect and facing upward. **Plants \$5.00**

Robert Treat. This is a favorite with certain florists we know. Almost the color of the American Beauty rose. It bears abundantly large blooms that are held erect over a tall and vigorous plant. Decorative type. **Tubers \$1.00**

Rollo Boy. Delicate amber, shading to old gold. The hybrid-cactus blooms are large, they keep well, and are held on the best of stems. **Tubers \$1.50; Plants \$.75**

Roman Eagle. (Sanhican.) Medium to large flowers of brilliant burnished copper color—a very attractive autumn shade. A profuse bloomer, with stiff stems and dark green foliage. Decorative. **Tubers \$2.00; Plants \$1.00**

Rosa Nell. This is not a prolific variety, but every bloom "rings the bell." Immense flowers of bright cerise, without tints or shadings of any kind. A deep, full decorative, with fine stems. One of our favorites. **Tubers \$.75**

Sagamore. (Badetty.) One of the finest golden yellows, for commercial purposes especially. It is held on strong stems over a sturdy plant and is very prolific. With its great substance and keeping qualities, it makes a first-class cut-flower. **Tubers \$1.00; Plants \$.50**

Salbach's White. (Salbach.) This full, deep, white decorative, with its firm texture and fine stem and habits, will make a worthwhile addition to any Dahlia garden. **Tubers \$3.50; Plants \$1.75**

Sanhican's Bluebird. (Sanhican.) An uncommon blending of violet with a bluish tint that comes nearer to blue than any other Dahlia. A large, decorative with strong, wiry stem. In combination with Sanhican's Gem (below), it makes a glorious blending of color. **Tubers \$2.00; Plants \$1.00**

Sanhican's Gem. (Sanhican.) A decorative of clear old-rose, with a glistening sheen in the sunlight. This variety has been awarded a Certificate by the Dahlia Society of New Jersey, and is one of Sanhican's best. **Tubers \$2.00; Plants \$1.00**

Sanhican's Nymph. (Sanhican.) A 1928 introduction of great beauty and good size. It is decorative in type, rich primrose-yellow, with the reverse of its quilled petals touched with rose. It has a fine center, and is held on a plant of medium tall habit. **Tubers \$7.50; Plants \$3.75**

Seal of Connecticut. (Alling.) Fine clear, bright, golden yellow. Its immense decorative blooms are borne very freely on a bush of moderate height. A very large Dahlia and a good one. **Plants \$2.50**

Shirley E. Shattuck. Here is a Dahlia of different formation from any we have ever seen. A decorative of orchid lavender. Fine stems hold the many flowers over a bush of semi-dwarf habit. **Tubers \$2.50**

Shudow's Lavender. Silvery lavender, shaded with white, this beautiful decorative is without a superior in lavenders. The large blooms are held erect on excellent stems over a tall plant with lace-like foliage. Requires more care than most Dahlias to bring it to its best—but well worth the trouble. **Tubers \$1.00**

Silverado. (Seal.) A distinctive, large-petaled hybrid cactus from California. Huge blooms of white, with lavender shadings at the center. The plant is tall and vigorous, and the stems are good. **Tubers \$5.00; Plants \$2.50**

Siskiyou. A ludicrous little bush, stoutly holding up several enormous blooms of pinkish mauve—ten or more inches across them. It's just right to use as a border for your Dahlia garden. **Tubers \$1.50; Plants \$.75**

Susan G. Tevis. An extremely soft and pleasing shade of lilac, with a bluer undertone. Another decorative, and a good one. **Tubers \$.75**

The Bandit. Narrow petals—that curl and twist—of mahogany-red and pure gold; a dazzling combination. The large hybrid-cactus blooms are held erect on black wire-like stems. It was awarded a Certificate by the A. D. S. **Tubers \$2.50**

The Lemonade. (Ward.) This large clear yellow decorative has been called one of the finest Dahlias ever originated in New England. It is commendable in every way. **Tubers \$3.50; Plants \$1.75**

Trentonian. A coppery-bronze decorative, held straight across the top of a cane-like stem. Petals are broad and flat, forming an attractive flower of good size that has won many a prize. Certificated by the D. S. of N. J. **Tubers \$1.00**



The U. S. A. With a vivid orange coloring that has made it very popular. A large flower of the peony type, with fine stem.
Tubers \$1.75

Valiant. A beautiful bright red cactus, similar in shape to F. W. Fellows, with long slender petals curving forward over the center.
Tubers \$1.75

Waldheim Sunshine. (Peacock.) Another of our largest varieties. A huge deep yellow decorative, with twisted, wavy petals that relieve the immense size from stiffness. See the picture on inside of back cover.
Tubers \$15.00; Plants \$7.50

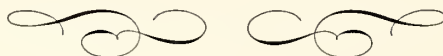
Watchung Sunrise. (Smith.) Large deep blooms, with a narrow clear rose-pink margin around each golden amber petal. A decorative of unusual formation—the outer petals curving backward almost to the stem. Created a sensation at the New York Dahlia Show.
Tubers \$7.50; Plants \$3.75

William H. Hogan. (Success.) An unblended combination of rich red and white that compels attention. Just a bit of curl at the end of each petal makes it even more attractive.
Tubers \$7.50; Plants \$3.75

World's Best White. (Murphy.) Its name is not far wrong, for this is one of the finest white Dahlias yet produced. A large decorative with a full center. A fine exhibition flower, and its excellent stem, good keeping qualities, and abundance of blooms give it a rating second to none for cutting.
Tubers \$1.50; Plants \$1.75

White Sister. A pure white decorative of lovely formation.
Tubers \$1.00

Wizard of Oz. Very large flowers of amber-pink, shaded with salmon. Decorative, with the blooms borne profusely on fine stems. An all-around, good Dahlia that will grace any garden.
Tubers \$1.50



What Our Friends Say

SILVER CREEK, N. Y., 12/10/28
MR. O. DOWNS,
DEAR SIR:

I want to tell you something about your Dahlias. I travelled five hundred miles to see the New York Show.

A couple of hours before the close of the show I persuaded your man to let me have a few blooms to take home to show my wife but he did not think it could be done on account of the distance. With the help of a friend we took four blooms, two of "My Maryland" and two "Jane Cows" used one of the association tins and filled it about two-thirds full of peat around the stems and started for Buffalo, when I boarded the train the porter was starting to make up the berths, and I offered him a dollar if he would find some place to put the flowers until we got to Buffalo. He said, "Good Lord, ah can't find no place to put them sun flowers, they's too big!" "Well," I said, "alright then, throw them under my bed," and went into the smoking room disgusted with the Porter, and sure enough when I came to go to bed he had thrown them under my bed. You can imagine my surprise when I got up in the morning near Buffalo and found the flowers just as nice as when I took them out of the show room. I reached home about nine o'clock in the morning and took the blooms and freshened them up in cold water and had them in the window of the First National Bank for two days. Everybody that saw them raved about them.

So I can truthfully say Downs Dahlias are hard to beat. These flowers were cut one day before the show, kept two days at Madison Square Garden and two days in the Bank window here.

Yours truly,

HENRY SCHEYER.

ETOWAH, TENNESSEE
NOV. 13, 1928
DOWN'S DAHLIA FARMS,
GENTLEMEN:

I bought several Dahlias from you last Spring. They all did fine. I have to tell you something about one of your own introductions, "Jane Cowl." I can say it is the finest Dahlia on the market—at least for this climate. The plants were the strongest I have ever seen. They all continued to bloom until killed by frost November 10th. Not one bloom showed the center. It was the only Dahlia in my garden that didn't show its center after blooming for two months. I began taking my Dahlias up today. The "Jane Cows" were the finest clumps I have ever seen. If you have any more Dahlias as fine as "Jane Cowl" please let me know.

I just couldn't help saying something to you about your introduction.
Yours truly,

CHAS. H. MCGHEE

TULSA, OKLAHOMA,
NOV. 2ND., 1928
DOWN'S DAHLIA FARMS,
GENTLEMEN:

No doubt you will be interested to know how "Jane Cowl" gave an account of itself in a section of the country that is popularly supposed to be unfavorable to Dahlias. "Jane Cowl" comes the nearest to my ideal of any Dahlia I have ever grown. It produced more than twenty blooms, every one of which was perfect, and every stem from three to four feet long, the blooms from eight to eleven inches in diameter with keeping qualities of a chrysanthemum.

Yours truly,

ALLEN HENRY



Downs Dahlia Farms
Clayton, N. J.

DOWNS DAHLIA FARMS
 CLAYTON, NEW JERSEY

Date.....

Name

Street or Box Number _____ County _____

City or Town _____ State _____

All orders are shipped by mail, at planting time, unless otherwise requested.

[illegible]

CUT OFF ON DOTTED LINE

WE GUARANTEE

That our tubers will reach you in first class condition, be true to name, and satisfy you in every way. You are requested to return at once any shipment, either roots or plants, that does not meet with your entire approval. We will then refund your money or refill the order; whichever you prefer. On the other hand, we will also appreciate it if you will let us know, and tell your neighbors, too, when you are exceptionally well pleased. We will not use your name without permission.



FROM CANADA:

August 31st, 1928

I received first prize for the finest and largest decorative in the Toronto Exhibition, where you have to have real flowers to win a place, with "Jane Cowl." I never had so much "kick" out of anything as I did from this flower. The one bloom was worth all I paid for the tuber and more. I brought the flower home Saturday (it had been on display from Thursday) and it was still in good shape, especially the center. It doesn't seem to drop its petals. You are certainly to be congratulated on bringing out such a 100% Dahlia.



FENTON, MICH.

March 13, 1929

It may interest you to know that I won the Garden and Home Builders' Achievement Medal with a bloom of "Jane Cowl" for the best flower in the show. I also got first on "Jane Cowl" for the largest measuring 14½ inches. The plants I got from you were sure fine. The above exhibition was that of the Michigan Dahlia Society held in Lansing.



FROM MASSACHUSETTS:

Oct. 25th, 1928

I have been growing the cream of the new ones for the past five years and I can say without any hesitation that this is the finest thing that has ever graced my garden. It is absolutely insect proof. I have yet to find a single weakness, and if I were to grow only one variety, it would be "Jane Cowl."



FROM YAKIMA, WASHINGTON:

Late this season I secured three plants of "Jane Cowl." The two from you multiplied wonderfully—better than any plant of any variety I ever grew. If you ever want a reference as to the plants sent out by you, just let me know.

FROM OHIO:

February 2nd, 1929

For a number of years we have been getting Dahlia roots from you, also plants, and we have never lost a single one, nor have any proved untrue to label. Last year, in addition to other varieties, we had "Jane Cowl" and "My Maryland" from you and the blooms far exceed in size and beauty any other varieties on our place. We have some mighty good varieties in our collection, but these two were in a class by themselves.



FROM NEW YORK:

Oct. 30th, 1928

Thought I ought to write and let you know that the green plant of "My Maryland" that came from your place on Mr.——'s order certainly was worth the price. I got some of the most beautiful blooms, and everyone that saw them said they never saw anything like them. I exhibited them in the window of the First National Bank and they were admired by hundreds of people.



FROM CANADA:

Sept. 22nd, 1928

Just a line to let you know how pleased I am with the results I obtained from the tubers I got from you this Spring. I won nine firsts at the Canadian National Exposition and an Award of Merit. I also won seven firsts, one second and three thirds at the Ontario Dahlia Society's Show.



FROM NEW YORK:

Sept. 24th, 1928

Although the past season has been a poor one for Dahlias, your tubers made fine strong healthy plants. They were very much admired by all, especially "My Maryland" and "Jane Cowl." Will send you another order for tubers in the Spring.

(These letters, with their signatures, may be seen at any time at our office.)



1. *Glory of Monmouth*, a moderate sized *Decorative* especially noted for its good keeping qualities. For full description see page 12.



2. *Jane Cowl*. This Dahlia is also shown on the front cover. It has been grown to fourteen inches in diameter. For full description see page 10.



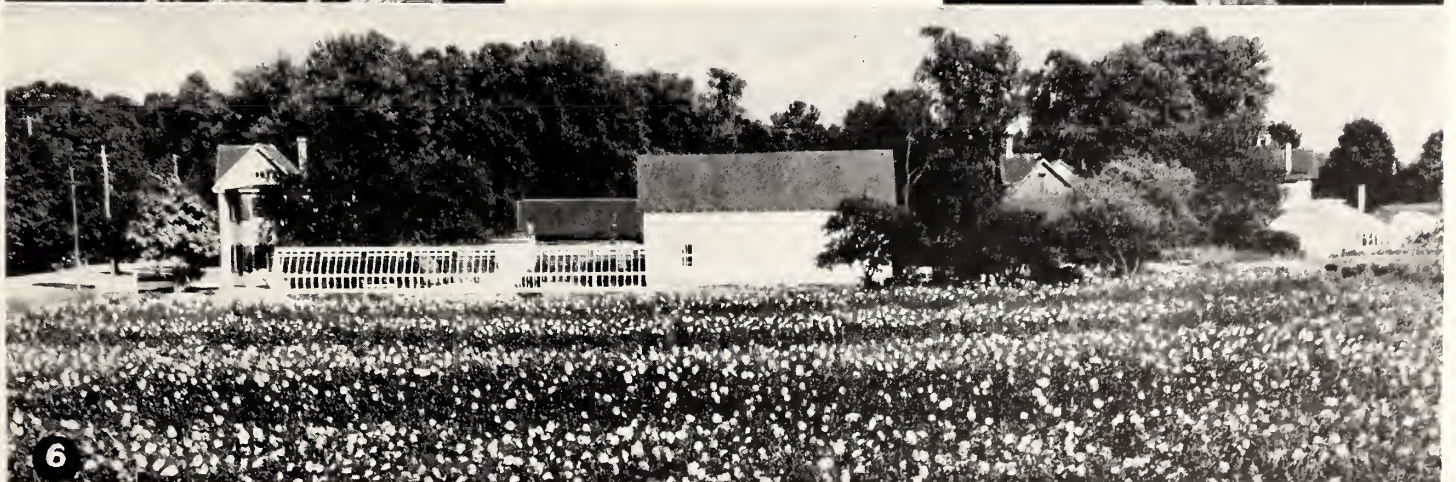
3. *Waldheim Sunshine*, a huge, deep yellow *Decorative* worthy of its name. For complete description see page 14.



4. *Sanhican's Bluebird*, probably the bluest dahlia ever grown. For full description see page 13.



5. *Pop Stewart*, an exquisite shade of lilac pink distinguishes this beautiful medium sized dahlia. For full description see page 13.



6. Another view of one of the fields at *Downs Dahlia Farms*, Clayton, N. J.



MY MARYLAND

